

**MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING**  
**ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

**March 8, 2023**

**Council Chambers – 6 p.m.**

**1175 E Main St**

Present: Commissioners Landt (Chair), Eldridge (Vice-Chair), Adams, Bachman, Lewis; Director Black, Deputy Director Dials, Analyst Kiewel, Manager Sullivan

Absent: Senior Services Superintendent Glatt

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Landt called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

APRC Goal Setting Workshop - January 24, 2023

**Motion:** Bachman moved to approve the minutes from January 24, 2023 as submitted. Seconded by Adams.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

APRC Study Session – February 1, 2023

**Motion:** Bachman moved to approve the minutes from February 1, 2023 as submitted. Seconded by Adams.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

**III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Due to some errors found in the fee calculations, staff would like to pull Calle Guanajuato Rental Space Application Approval and Fee Increase Proposal and place it on the April 5, 2023 meeting, which will be notified as a Special Meeting to allow for action to be taken. This will allow times for renters to be notified of proposed fee increases. It will be necessary to pass a motion to extend the deadline for fee establishment when that item comes up.

**IV. PUBLIC FORUM**

None

**V. CONSENT**

**a) Bee City USA Subcommittee Member Appointment (Action)**

Eldridge requested the item be removed from the consent agenda so comments can be made for the record.

**Motion:** Eldridge moved to acknowledge the appointment of Nicolas Pflug by the Chair of APRC to the Ashland Bee City USA Subcommittee. Seconded by Bachman.

**Discussion:** Eldridge made the following statement: Nicolas Pflug is a student at SOU and is Vice Chair of the Pollinator Club at SOU. Eldridge is excited to add a student to an APRC subcommittee and Pflug is thrilled to have this opportunity. Pflug has been attending meetings and has provided great ideas and mobilized SOU students to help organize pollinator garden tours. This is a fabulous direction to continue a partnership with SOU through student involvement and hopes to see expansion into applied research with faculty.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

**VI. DIRECTORS REPORT**

**Oak Knoll Golf Course-Request for Proposals**

There was a mandatory on-site meeting on Thursday March 2 for anyone interested in submitting a proposal for management and operations of the OKGC. Lots of good questions were asked at the meeting. The RFP schedule has been adjusted with the final deadline to be Monday April 3rd instead of Monday March 20th.

**APRC Budget Presentation to City Council**

The presentation was scheduled to be held March 7. That meeting was postponed due to a lack of quorum. The presentation will be scheduled for the week of March 13.

## VII. BUSINESS

### a) **Art Beyond 2023 – Request for Art Installation in Lithia Park (Action)**

Dials reviewed the [staff memo](#) which included the following information.

- *Art Beyond* is the Schneider Museum of Art's biannual outdoor art adventure. Taking place in and around Ashland, this exhibition focuses on sculptural and installation-based artworks.
- Local artist, florist and builder, Isabella Thorndike Church, has proposed and is requesting an art installation in Lithia Park in the Sycamore Grove
- This request requires Commissioners to grant permission to erect the installation using trees per [AMC 10.68.080](#)

Dials invited Scott Malbaurn, Executive Director of Schneider Museum of Art, and Isabella Thorndike Church, artist, to provide comments on the item.

- Malbaurn stated Art Beyond was initially launched in 2021 and partnered with APRC that year to place an installation in Lithia Park
- Thorndike Church's art style uses natural materials and attempts to draw attention to things in nature that are already there
- Eldridge inquired about the level of tension that will be required to install the exhibit
  - Thorndike Church stated the materials that will be used are light weight and will need to be under some tension, but is happy to work with APRC staff when installing the exhibit
- Thorndike Church stated there will be protection between the tree and the line used to hang the installation to protect the bark
- Malbaurn clarified the event is planned to take place every two years

**Motion:** Eldridge moved to approve the request by the Schneider Museum of Art to feature art in Lithia Park as stated in the staff memo. Seconded by Lewis

**Discussion:** Lewis stated support for the proposal. Landt stated the area is sensitive and would like to see the motion include a requirement to work with the APRC arborist on the installation.

**Vote:** A vote was not taken

**Vote to Amend the Motion:** Bachman moved to approve the request by the Schneider Museum of Art to feature art in Lithia Park as stated in the staff memo under the general supervision by the APRC arborist. Eldridge seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes (to amend the motion)

**Motion as Amended:** To approve the request by the Schneider Museum of Art to feature art in Lithia Park as stated in the staff memo under the general supervision by the APRC arborist

**Vote:** The vote was all yes (to pass the motion)

### b) **“Wonder Bailout” Trail (working title) Proposal (Action)**

Black provided a summary of the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#) that included the following:

- Goal number 5 for the current biennium states:  
EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF AND MAKE A DECISION ON ALL TRAILS AND PROPOSALS BY THE ROGUE VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOCIATION.
- The goal is being accomplished through the formation of a Trails Subcommittee who developed and is implementing a process to review and make recommendations to the Parks Commission on trail proposals
- The proposal being brought before the Commissioners for consideration is the first proposal to move through this process
- Staff is recommending approval of the proposal ([electronic link](#)) with the recommendation submitted by the Ashland Forestlands Management Advisory Committee as follows
  - 1) Minimize drainage crossings, particularly at the bottom of the route
  - 2) Avoid forest monitoring plots (rebar and transect lines)
  - 3) Avoid manzanita reserve area along the lower bailout spur trail
  - 4) Minimize interaction of cars/peds/bikes at exit
- Black displayed a map that was included in the meeting packet

Eldridge, a member of the Trails Subcommittee, provided the following information:

- “Wonder Bailout” is a working name. The trail has yet to be officially named
- The current trail, from the fairy ponds trailhead, is an uphill only bike trail (shared trail with pedestrians)
- The proposal calls for two exits from this uphill trail to a downhill trail system leading back to the trailhead
- There are currently no easily accessible downhill single-track trails on the west side of the watershed, where this trail is proposed
- This trail would provide downhill options for beginner and intermediate riders while providing all levels of riders an option to shorten the climb of the current Wonder Trail
- The trail was initially reviewed by the Trails Subcommittee
  - A Working Group of the subcommittee did a more in-depth analysis of the proposal, including on the ground field trips
  - A proposal, based on the initial application that was submitted, was developed, and approved by the Trails Subcommittee
  - The Ashland Forestlands Advisory Committee reviewed and approved the proposal with the 4 additional recommendations listed above

#### Discussion

- Eldridge clarified that the purpose of the trails is to allow riders to “bailout” if the climb is too difficult and also provides more beginner options, and also provides a single-track downhill reward after climbing
- Black clarified that staff and volunteers are qualified to design and build trails and would consult experts regarding geology and other technical aspects where necessary
  - Eldridge added that Nick McDaniel, a BLM recreation specialist who has designed and built many trails in Southern Oregon, has flagged the area and prepared the preliminary design for the trail; RVMBA is proposing to contract with professional trail builder
- Black clarified that any contracts to construct trails on APRC or City of Ashland property will be done directly with APRC through the City contracting process
  - Black reiterated that some trails will likely be built by staff and volunteers rather than entering into a contract with a builder
- Black clarified that APRC may contribute financially to the construction of this trail using funds that are regularly budgeted for trail improvement
- Black clarified there is an agreement with the City of Ashland to manage trails and will be acting as project manager
- Adams provided the following name for consideration using the Alice and Wonderland theme
  - Thackery (given name of the March Hare)
  - Imogene (Alice’s aunt)
    - Lewis later suggested “Lewis Loop” as a name
- Adams stated that trails, or longitudinal parks, are an efficient use of parks funds and recognized the local trail community (hiking and biking) support the trails system
- Black clarified this will be the final approval and will not go to City Council

**Motion:** Eldridge moved to approve the Wonder Trail Bailout Proposal with the recommendations made by the Ashland Forestlands Management Advisory Committee and direct staff to manage all aspects necessary to complete the project. Seconded by Adams.

**Discussion:** Eldridge stated this a fabulous first project to move through the process and noted the collaboration necessary to get it to this point. Adams recognized Eldridge for her work on the Trails Subcommittee to develop the process and move trail proposals forward for the community. Landt generally recognized all the members of the Subcommittee and the various people that worked together to get to this point and specifically called out Eldridge, Torsten Heycke (AWTA) and Casey Botts (RVMBA).

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

#### c) Calle Guanajuato Rental Space Application Approval and Fee Increase Proposal (Action)

Landt and Black stated staff is asking to waive the deadline to establish fees and approval of contracts no later than April 12 to allow renters to review the proposed fees and provide comments.

**Motion:** Bachman moved to extend the deadline for approving the fee structure for Guanajuato Way to no later than April 12. Seconded by Eldridge.

**Discussion.** Bachmann stated it is wise to delay this item to get it right.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

**d) BN23/25 APRC Goals Review (Information)**

Black stated he will be presenting a resource allocation analysis for each goal and that this item is for discussion only at this point. Nine goals were listed on screen, in no particular order that includes information on the resources necessary to achieve each goal

- **Goal:** Employ best management practices to strengthen relations between management, co-workers, City employees and community members. Potential steps include work with APRC's HR provider – the City of Ashland HR Department – to simplify and communicate HR policies and procedures, improve diversity equity and inclusion efforts, ensure all staff understand how HR benefits employees and how to access HR, and reorganize and add staff to free up management time for these efforts.
  - **Category:** Management/Governance
  - **Resources:** Staff Time/Consultant
  - **Fiscal Amount:** \$12,500
  - **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** Operations (Admin Professional Services)
- **Goal:** Develop an environmental sustainability and implementation plan.
  - **Category:** Environmental
  - **Resources:** Staff Time/Volunteers/Support Funds
  - **Fiscal Amount:** \$12,500
  - **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** Budgeted/Resource Available: Operations (Admin Professional Services)
- **Goal:** Investigate, develop, and implement a dedicated permanent funding source to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission.
  - **Category:** Management/Governance/Fiscal
  - **Resources:** Volunteers/Commissioner Time
  - **Fiscal Amount:** N/A
  - **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** N/A
- **Goal:** Build east main street neighborhood park including the dog park, bike-skills park and pump track.
  - **Category:** Park Development
  - **Resources:** Staff Time/Contractors/Planning Consultants/CIP Funds
  - **Fiscal Amount:** \$1,341,000
  - **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** Budgeted/Resource Available: CIP (F&B, Other)
    - Black clarified that the funds allocated to develop this park came from previous real estate sales, including the sale of the YMCA Park to the YMCA and the sale of the land next to it which was subsequently developed for affordable housing
    - Food and Beverage Funds and private donations will be used to construct the pump track and skills park
- **Goal:** Improve public aquatic recreation and competitive options in Ashland consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Pool Ad Hoc Committee and ensure the continuous operation of an adequate recreational pool in Ashland during the summer months, at a minimum, until construction begins on a new pool.
  - **Category:** Aquatic Development (Recreation)
  - **Resources:** Staff Time/Contractors/CIP Funds
  - **Fiscal Amount:** \$10,200,000
  - **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** Budgeted/20% Resources Available: CIP (F&B, Bond, Donations, Sponsorship)
    - Black clarified that APRC has 20% of the necessary funds on hand and that the remaining funds would need to come from various sources including a general obligation bond, donations, grants, and sponsorships
    - Black noted this is the closest that APRC has been to being able to fund the pool
- **Goal:** Seek out and support opportunities for community building through programs and events in our parks, open spaces and trail networks that celebrate art, music, sports and nature.
  - **Category:** Community Events

- **Resources:** Staff Time/Advertising/Partnerships
- **Fiscal Amount:** \$5,000 (advertising/printing needs)
- **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** Budgeted/Resource Available: Operations (Admin Professional Services)
- **Goal:** Perform a system-wide master plan for Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission to include the following sections, at least (sections may be completed together or independently): Vision and Goals; Active Transportation/Access; System Maintenance; Fleet; Design Guidelines; APRC Policies
  - **Category:** Planning
  - **Resources:** Staff Time/Consultants/Volunteers
  - **Fiscal Amount:** \$150,000
  - **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** Budgeted/Resources Available: CIP (F&B)
    - Black noted that this is a carry-over goal from the current biennium and that this project was put on hold because APRC received less F&B revenue than what was expected
    - This plan will help develop and implement a maintenance plan to deal with deferred maintenance
- **Goal:** Continue to improve and develop our watershed pedestrian and MTB trail network, including connectivity to adjacent National Forest Land (above) and town centers (below) city ownership, as well as securing easements on private properties that protect public access to this network.
  - **Category:** Trail Development
  - **Resources:** Staff Time/Volunteers/Materials
  - **Fiscal Amount:** \$50,000
  - **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** Budgeted/Resources Available: Operations (Open Space, Trails)
    - Black noted that organized volunteer groups do a significant amount of work on the trails
- **Goal:** Develop plan for Oak Knoll Golf Course to respond to a variety of current issues at the course: Drought; Fiscal; Playing Conditions; Staffing; Ancillary Uses; Long-Term Maintenance Plan
  - **Category:** Management/Recreation/Environment/Fiscal
  - **Resources:** Staff Time/Contractor/Capital Improvements
  - **Fiscal Amount:** TBD
  - **Budgeted Resources Available (23/25): Budgeted/Resource Available:** TBD
    - Black noted that more will be known on the resources needed after proposals for operating the golf course have been received through the RFP process towards the end of the month

Black concluded that there are resources available to accomplish these goals and that bringing on a Parks Superintendent will free up other staff, including Black, to move work on the goals forward

- Black conceded that a majority of the funds for the pool have yet to be secured, but resources for the other goals are available if the budget is approved as proposed

#### Discussion

- Eldridge stated the importance of the community building/event goal, noted that there is \$5,000 budgeted for that goal, and asked how that goal can be accomplished with that amount of money
  - Dials stated that the only way that APRC will be able to increase the number of community events is through partnerships similar to the partnerships with the Schneider Museum and the group that puts on Silent Disco
  - Dials added that some business owners have expressed an interest in sponsoring music events at the band shell
  - Black clarified that the \$5,000 identified for this goal would be in addition to the funds already allocated for existing APRC events
  - Dials noted that the Rogue World Music Festival is another example of an event made possible through partnerships
- Black stated that the resources listed should not be viewed as limiting. If an opportunity arises and funds are not available, Commissioners could reallocate funds accordingly

**VIII. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF**

Dials stated that she attended the economic development meeting on Monday night and there were discussion and plans to follow-up on creating partnerships for economic development activities.

**IX. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

- a) Ashland Senior Advisory Committee—March 13, 2023
  - Electronic Meeting—3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- b) APRC Study Session —April 5, 2023
  - Electronic Meeting—6 p.m.
- c) APRC Regular Business Meeting—April 12, 2023
  - Council Chambers—6 p.m.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

**Executive Session**

Landt called the executive session to order pursuant to ORD 192.660(2)(e) to deliberate with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

Respectfully submitted  
Sean Sullivan, Business Operations Manager